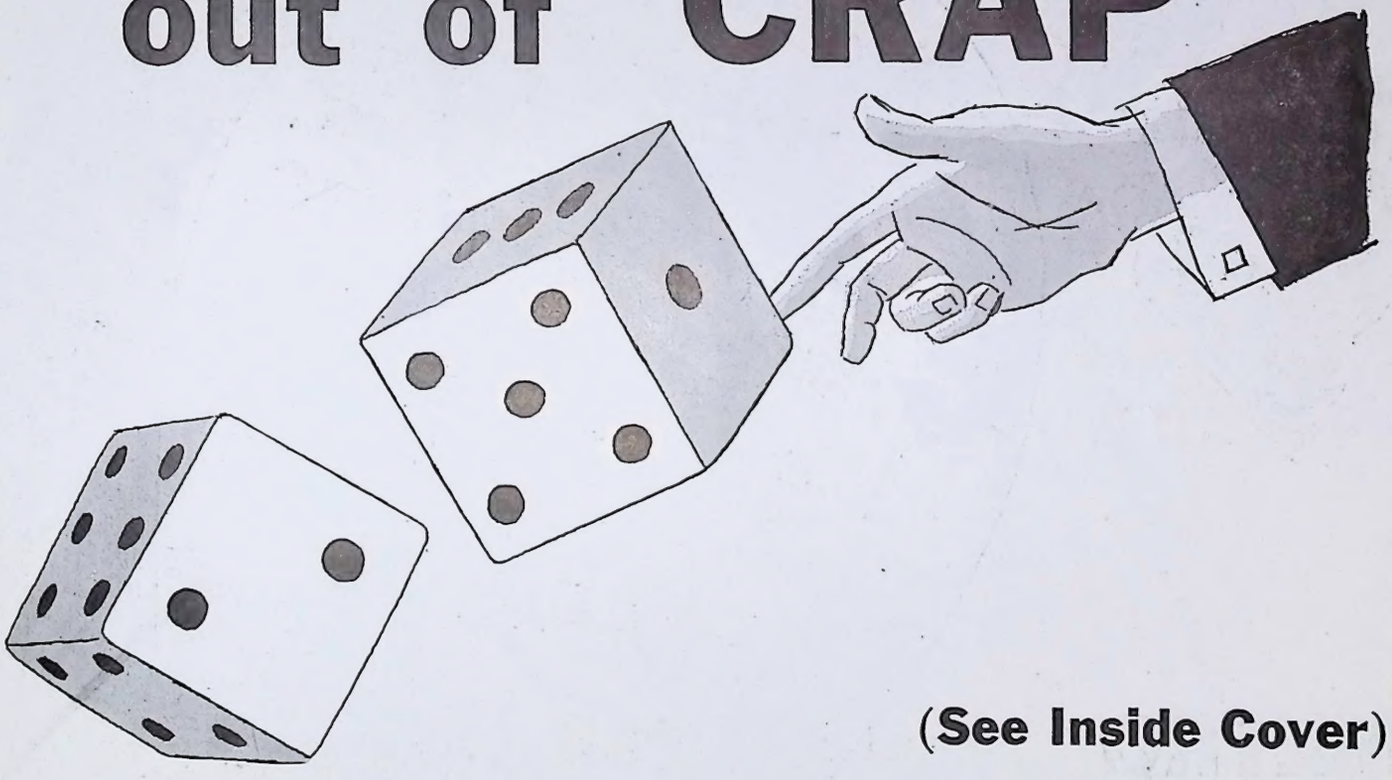
CANADIAN
MOVING PICTURE
DIGEST

Vol. 22, No. 42 TORONTO 2, CANADA February 14th, 1931

TAKE the GAMBLE out of CRAP



(See Inside Cover)

PUBLISHED BY
CANADIAN MOVING PICTURE DIGEST COMPANY LIMITED
259 SPADINA AVENUE, TORONTO 2

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Has Come Nearer To Removing The Chance-Element From Production Than Any Other Company—

And Now M-G-M At The Top Of Its Best Form Brings You

The LUCKY SEVEN

The EASIEST WAY
Constance Bennett

Imagine three names like Constance Bennett, Robert Montgomery and Adolphe Menjou in one picture! The producers of "Paid" have taken another stage thriller and made a talkie gold mine of it!

The MAN IN POSSESSION
Robert Montgomery

M-G-M grabbed the film rights to this current Broadway stage smash. It's a lulu for pictures!

SHIPMATES
Robert Montgomery

The navy again cooperates with M-G-M to make a spectacular sea romance. Remember "The Midshipman" and "Flying Fleet." Here's one in talkies. With Ernest Torrence, Dorothy Jordan, Cliff Edwards.

The GREAT LOVER
Adolphe Menjou

Menjou's personality fits talkies like a glove! He's going to leap into the spotlight now. And this famed stage hit is perfect for his talents.

AMONG THE MARRIED
Adolphe Menjou

This was so good on the stage they produced it twice. Another exceptional role for Menjou. With Leila Hyams, Mary Duncan Norman Foster, Hedda Hopper.

STEPPING OUT
(All Star)

Elmer Harris, author of "Young Sinners", "Ladies All" and other popular hits knows his box-office! Plays about making pictures in Hollywood are all the rage. This one's a darb!

The LULLABY
(All Star)

The stage success that shook Manhattan. Edward Knoblock never put more heart and soul thrill into a play than this. And he wrote a flock of successes!

METRO GOLDWYN MAYER

Where Men Are Showmen

On the Pinnacle of Fame

350

Northern Electric Sound Systems have now been installed in Canadian Theatres.

* * *

Chosen because of its high quality of reproduction and the Dominion-wide Service. This insures its constant operation at all times.

* * * *

7,600 leading theatres in 57 foreign countries lend their testimony to its leadership as they are equipped with the same System under the name of Western Electric. The Northern manufactures, installs and services in Canada for Canadians.

Enquire of the

RESEARCH PRODUCTS SALES DEPARTMENT

637 CRAIG STREET WEST - MONTREAL

Northern Electric SOUND SYSTEM

The VOICE of ACTION

Western Electric in U.S.A.

TEARS PROMISE SMILES FOR THE BOX OFFICE

"EAST LYNNE"

What a Picture--
And What a Cast

ANN HARDING
CLIVE BROOK
CONRAD NAGEL
ERNEST TORRENCE
CISSIE LOFTUS
BERYL MERCER
O. P. HEGGIE

Of Course, It's a FOX PICTURE

Fox Film Corporation, Limited

HARLEY L. CLARKE, President.

Toronto - Montreal - St. John - Winnipeg - Calgary - Vancouver

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RAY LEWIS
Editor and Managing Director

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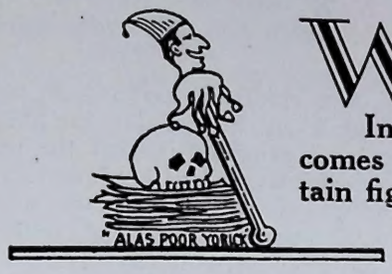
Good-Will



WE HAVE heard of "Good-will" in business as indicating a value which that business has built up by way of Trade values.

In the purchase of a business, the "good-will" valuation comes into the adjustment of the purchase price, at a certain figure; and varies in accordance with the "earning" ability and potentialities of the business involved in a sale.

But is there not another interpretation of "good-will," in connection with a business, is there not the possibility of a literal interpretation of the term, which translated by way of explanation, may actually be defined as the "good-will" which a business has earned, through its policy and methods of doing business.

In listening to the evidence, as given by many exhibitors, before Commissioner Peter White, who is acting for the Government in its investigation of an alleged Combine of the Motion Picture Industry, and wherein Famous Players Canadian Corp. plays the conspicuous, if not, inglorious part, would one be disposed to grant to Famous Players Canadian any money consideration for its claim on the grounds of "good-will?"

If "good-will" is an indication of a future, or continued earning ability of a business, neither Famous Players Canadian Corp., nor Paramount-Publix which controls this company, nor its subsidiary, Famous-Lasky Paramount, nor the B. & F., another subsidiary, can sell any "good-will" in connection with these enterprises, for not only would the exhibitors, but the distributors, who are independent in truth; and if not in actuality, in spirit, be grateful for an opportunity to do without the product, or theatres of the companies mentioned, but if language is a gauge of the feeling which exists, then the very antithesis to "good-will" has been established. Fair play, a square deal, a little at least of the "milk of human kindness," a sense of honour, of "playing the game," a "live and let live policy," a dependability upon a verbal, or written promise, or transaction, make "good-will;" and if such is the definition of this asset, the greatest in business, then the Famous-Players Canadian Corp. and the Paramount-Publix, the others mentioned, have dismally failed in the exercise of these business virtues; and operate, not through business ability, "good-will," showmanship, but through the force of a malignant power which these companies, through money, and coercion, intimidation, bullying, have been enabled to exercise.

The Canadian Government, with The Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett as Prime Minister of Canada, exemplifies, through its government, the significance of "good-will." A desire to administer opportunities equally and justly to all Canadian citizens, a desire to build Industry and Enterprise, by fair means and not by foul.

RAY PRESENTS

RAY LEWIS

IT IS interesting to observe that A. J. Balaban of Balaban & Katz, has renounced $75,000 yearly, as a salary from Paramount-Publix, to offer his services to the Christian Science Church as a practitioner.

Mr. Balaban is not the only showman who has had very pronounced religious aspirations. The late E. F. Albee's name will always remain identified with the Church of St. John The Divine, New York; and like E. F. Albee, who gave vaudeville a tone by housing it in de luxe theatres, this particular Balaban of a group of Balabans, seven in number, is credited with having been the inspiration for the Publix shows to which Paramount prefixed its name.

However, there will still be six Balabans; Barney, John, who has the jurisdiction over the Chicago and Detroit Paramount-Publix houses, Max, Dave, Harry, and Elmer, all with Paramount-Publix, Katz' gift to this organization, when the tie-up was effected. "Ain't nature grand?" Our business is such a family affair, no wonder that it appears to be the policy of merged interests in our Industry to let out the men who helped build up the business, because the "relations" all have to be taken care of; and they all desire to live as well as "Papa Adolph" or "Uncle Harry." It is not the only extravagance for which this Industry is responsible, but it is a substantial one, for it has permeated all branches of the Industry, in every department, to the spotlight thrown upon the star, also a relative, for whom even an Einstein could not have found any film excuse, by way of "relativity."

IT IS not so long ago that we had the economic splurge, with high-priced men let out; and substitutes brought in, who were young enough and ambitious enough to let the "Big Noise" take all the credit and the salary for what they were doing. It was even decided to let the salesmen out. Bookings could be done at headquarters, and this efficiency urge, also involved the dismissal of "showmen," for of what service were these men, who were born and bred in the city, or town, in which their theatre operated, since the "Big Noise" did all the booking, even to the Shorts.

A school was opened by Paramount-Publix, leader of the economic-efficiency epidemic, where college graduates, who knew their Latin and Greek, and had a smattering of political economy, were trained to be theatre managers, at $25.00 per, if they had rich fathers, or uncles, who might be interested to invest in motion picture stock.

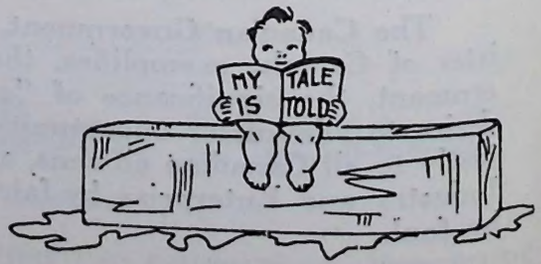
Real showmen were "promoted out" of the house and business, they were drawing $100.00 or perhaps $125.00 a week; ridiculous, when the "Big Noise" with the "Big Idea," had to have from three to five thousand a week, plus a bonus.

NOW that epidemic has passed; and Katz is talking about humanizing the theatres. The fact of the matter is, that the result of the "arranged shows" at headquarters, in the de luxe houses are not getting the patronage, whereas, those showmen, who are operating the neighbourhood houses, with a little more opportunity to arrange their own shows, are getting the business!

The Digest stressed this angle long ago, but if the idea does not spring like Minerva, full-armoured, out of the head of a Jupiter, in our Industry, one of the gods, it is not considered a good idea. The Digest is advocating the re-introduction of orchestras in theatres, advising the removal of the "Crape" but this will not be considered a "good idea," either, until one of the gods suddenly gets a brain-storm, and thinks of it!

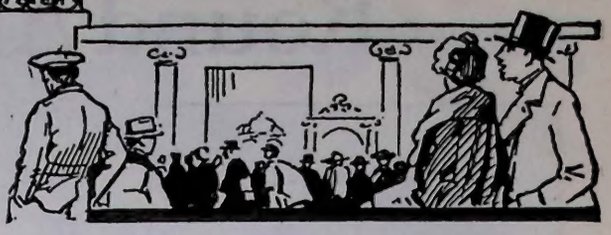
THE DIGEST warned against the all-dialogue film, stressing its reaction upon foreign distribution, but it is only two years later that the gods are beginning to let the idea germinate through their ungodlike craniums! It is curious, that in this Industry of Motion Pictures which has been founded upon imagination, in which imagination must play a leading part, that the only imagination the gods use is that which follows the practise of "seeing is believing."

An idea strikes this Industry like a plague, all get infected with it, not only in the style of productions, but in the business department, the latter, because some "Big Noise" is trying to sell an idea to his Chief, which will make him a "god" in the eyes of his Chief; and since most of the Chiefs have at least commonsense, and were born with a certain shrewdness, which enabled them to become millionaires in an Infant Industry, the "Big Noise" gets other "Noises," to adopt the idea, because he is an excellent sales artist; and Presto! the infection spreads, until they all wake up.



Public Hearing of Government Investigation Famous Players, City Hall, Toronto, Monday, February 23rd.

Show Business



(*Special to Digest from Ottawa*)

After practically every other theatre in Ottawa had passed up Universal's "White Hell of Pitz Palu," Manager Ambrose Nolan of the Avalon Theatre made a special hit of the production and was forced to hold it over for an extra three days because of the crowds. In a measure, special exploitation was responsible for the success of the engagement.

Nolan staged a private showing for newspapermen when he obtained signed reviews from the critics which he quoted in advance advertising. Before the opening date, Nolan printed 3,000 cards to each of which he affixed two slats. Armed with these, he covered all the ski trails around the city and the route of the Second Annual Dog Derby to plant the cards in the snowbanks, the cards being stuck in the snow a few feet from the regular trails all along the way where they could not be missed by the thousands of local ski enthusiasts. The route of the Dog Derby, 33 miles, was also well covered where they were seen by the big crowds which turned out for the annual three-day contest. Incidentally, the cards were colored so they would form a contrast with the white snow. Further, the picture was "recommended" in newspaper display advertising over the signature of the management.

Nolan pointed out that the audiences at the Avalon for the engagement were largely of the athletic type of young people which indicated that the ski-trail cards had been the "catch."

A law requiring the censorship of all theatre advertising containing illustrations, including newspaper displays and handbills, has become effective in the Province of Quebec through the proclamation of Hon. H. G. Carroll, Lieutenant-Governor. The new Act reads:

"No pictorial or moving picture performance shall be the subject of an advertisement in which advertisement a cut, drawing or engraving is used, unless such cut, drawing or engraving be a part of a poster or of a film previously approved by the Board of Censors of Moving Pictures; or, if such is not a part thereof, unless it has been specially approved by the said Board of Censors in accordance with the regulations enacted by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council."

This means that the Quebec Provincial Government is now censoring films, posters and advertisements.

Two thousand patrons were driven from the Palace Theatre at Calgary when a $125,000 fire destroyed the commercial structure next door to the theatre. When the flames became menacing, Manager Charles Straw announced from the stage that the audience would have to withdraw and the theatre was emptied without disorder. The fire was confined to the one building.

"The White Hell of Pitz Palu" proved such a popular hit at the Avalon Theatre, Ottawa, that it was held over for another three days by Manager P. J. Nolan, being doubled up with "The Hate Ship," a British feature, for the extra run.

The theatre situation in Ottawa took a substantial turn with the formal announcement of the organization of the Triangle Amusement Company with a capitalization of $2,000,000, for the control of eight independent theatres in Ottawa and Hull and with immediate plans for the erection of the Paradise Theatre in Ottawa at a cost of $300,000. It is the intention of the company to acquire other theatres in Eastern Ontario and negotiations are under way.

Owners and theatres in the merger are as follows: P. J. Nolan, president of the company and owner of the Avalon, Rexy and Columbia Theatres; Don B. Stapleton, proprietor of the Centre Theatre, who is a director and film buyer; Donat Paquin, Francais Theatre, Ottawa, and Laurier, Capitol and Eden Theatres, Hull; W. H. O'Regan, booker, and Ambrose Nolan, general manager.

An interesting history is behind the selection of the title of "Triangle" for the new corporation which, by the way, will have a Federal charter. In years gone by, Ben Stapleton, father of the present Centre proprietor, made a specialty of the old Triangle Films as well as being one of the original franchise-holders of Associated First National Exhibitors. The once familiar Triangle trade mark still forms a part of the illuminated Centre Theatre sign.

(*Special to Digest from Winnipeg*)

Licenses were issued during the calendar year 1930 for the operation of 104 moving picture theatres and shows in Manitoba, 25 less than the number issued the year before. In Winnipeg there were 37, in Brandon three, in Portage La Prairie and St. Boniface two each, and 60 at other points in the province.

The figures for the three previous years were 112 in 1927; 101 in 1928, 129 in 1929.

Closer investigation of the damage done to the Daylight Theatre at Saskatoon, Sask., by the fire Sunday morning, Feb. 1, when the Ferguson Block was gutted, has revealed that several hundred thousand dollars worth of damage was incurred and the theatre will not be open for some time.

Police are carefully checking the cause of the fire at the Ferguson block, and at the Stephenson block also Wednesday night in the belief that a fire bug was at work.

Last year the Manitoba amusement tax totals showed a decrease of about $70,000, chiefly because of less betting at horse races, and a decrease in the price of admission to motion picture theatres.

The amount received from amusement taxes was $196,800 from racing meets; $154,650 from theatres, and $18,502 for censor fees and circuses.

In the motion picture theatres, 19 films of British origin were shown, an increase of 13 over 1929. There were 1,083 films of American origin, 839 less than in 1929.

Round About the Studios

Marion Davies, of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, who will be seen next in "The Bachelor Father."

Reginald Denny was last week signed on a long term contract by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, as a result of his recent work for that organization.

Denny, it will be recalled, has appeared for Leo, the Lion, in Cecil De Mille's "Madam Satan," Grace Moore's "Jenny Lind," "Those Three French Girls," with Fifi Dorsay, "Parlor, Bedroom and Bath," with Buster Keaton, "Oh, For A Man" and Mary Pickford's "Kiki."

Howard Hughes is filming "The Front Page" from Bartlett Cormack's adaptation of the Ben Hecht-Charlie MacArthur stage hit, with Louis Wolheim and Pat O'Brien in the principal parts and with Mary Brian and Mae Clarke in the chief feminine roles. Lewis Milestone, director of "All Quiet on the Western Front" and "The Racket," is in charge.

Educational Pictures announce the launching of their new series of "Romantic Journeys" with the release of "Honeymoon Land" on February 1.

"Beyond Victory," Pathe's picture with the war as a background, will contain the most accurate scenes of the great conflict ever presented in one motion picture. The reason for this is that the scenes are actually those of the war itself and were obtained in the Pathe film library which boasts the most complete pictorial record of the war extant.

Margot Grahame who has been hailed as "Britain's Film Star," through her performance in "The Love Habit," is to play opposite Seymour Hicks in the new British International Pictures' production, "Glamour."

Natalie Moorhead has been given the feminine lead in John Gilbert's new M-G-M starring film, "Cheri-Bibi," which John Robertson is now directing.

"Cheri-Bibi' 'is an adaptation of the prize-winning French adventure story of the same name.

The Van Beuren Corporation announces that the next Vagabond Adventure pictures to be released through Pathe are "Dogs of Solitude," made in the Swiss Alps and "The Well of Fortaleza," an episode in Porto Rico.

Rex Bell, erstwhile cowboy star, has laid aside his sombrero and chaps to try his hand at bedroom farce. He has just been signed by Pathe to play a leading role in "Disappearing Enemies," a two-reel comedy directed by Wallace Fox.

Universal has acquired from the playwright, William Hurlbut, a play entitled, "Lilies of Broadway." It has not as yet been decided whether it will be produced first as a play in Los Angeles and New York, or whether it will be put directly into work. It was purchased by Carl Laemmle, Jr., for next year's program. William Hurlbut is the author of "Lilies of the Field," "Trimmed in Scarlet," "Bride of the Lamb" and "Recessional."

Columbia Pictures is selecting outstanding Spanish players for its Spanish version of Barbara Stanwyck's melodramatic starring vehicle, "Ten Cents a Dance." The picture following closely upon the Spanish "The Criminal Code," will go into production within the week under the direction of Christie Cabanne.

John P. Medbury, one of America's greatest humorists and newspapermen, has been signed by Walter Fuller, to write the off stage talk which will accompany a forthcoming "Curiosities," one of the most popular subjects in Columbia's seven series of shorts.

The Glee Club of the University of Michigan sings "The Victors," the famous college march of that institution in a current Pathe Audio Review. Artistic camera studies of the campus are interpolated between the scenes showing the Wolverines glorifying their Alma Mater. The Michigan number is the third college glee club subject in the Review. Dartmouth and Annapolis have previously lent their best voices to Review rendition of their songs.

A unique shot of the Chrysler Building in New York City, current in the Pathe Audio Review.

Constance Bennett, borrowed by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer from Pathe to appear in "The Easiest Way."

With "The Front Page" already in production, Howard Hughes will next produce for United Artists "Scarface," an original story which that astute biographer of criminals, Ben Hecht, is making ready for the screen. It is Mr. Hecht, of course, who co-authored "The Front Page" with Charles MacArthur and whose "Underworld" remains one of the bangup tales of the screen.

Joseph Santley, youthful stage veteran under contract to Pathe as a director was offered a lead as well as the position of stage director of "The New Yorkers," current hit revue on Broadway but turned it down to continue picture work. Santley is preparing to guide Helen Twelvetrees in "This Marriage Business." Incidentally, Richard Carle and Kathryn Crawford, two players who have appeared under the Pathe banner are in the cast of "The New Yorkers." Carle has appeared in "Sin Takes a Holiday," and "The Grand Parade," features and several two-reel comedies. Miss Crawford sang in "Red Hot Rhythm."

Jean Harlow, who was prominent in the cast of "Hell's Angels," is playing opposite Lew Ayres in Universal's production of "The Iron Man," the W. R. Burnett novel, which Tod Browning is directing. Miss Harlow replaces Dorothy Burgess in this cast, while others having roles in the picture are Robert Armstrong, John Miljan, Mike Donlin and Eddie Dillon.

"More Than A Kiss" is the new title for "All Women Are Bad," which William K. Howard will direct for Fox Films.

Roland Young has been made a member of the cast. Jeanette MacDonald, Edmund Lowe, Una Merkel and J. M. Kerrigan will be featured in the adaptation from the original story by William Anthony McGuire.

With Gareth Gundrey directing, the new Gainsborough talking version of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" is well under way at the Islington Studios.